

Language is a product of the need of cooperative understanding in all the work, and in connection with all the interests, of life. It is a societal phenomenon. It was necessary in war, the chase, and industry so soon as these interests were pursued cooperatively. Each group produced its own language which held that group together and sundered it from others.¹ All are now agreed that, whatever may have been the origin of language, it owes its form and development to usage. "Men's usage makes language." "The maxim that <usage is the rule of speech' is of supreme and uncontrolled validity in every part and parcel of every human tongue." ² "Language is only the imperfect means of men to find their bearings in the world of their memories; to make use of their memory, that is, their own experience and that of their ancestors, with all probability that this world of memory will be like the world of reality." ³ The origin of language is one of those origins which must ever remain enveloped in mystery. "How can a child understand the combinations of sound and sense when it must know language in order to learn them?" It must learn to speak without previously knowing how to speak, without any previous suspicion that the words of its mother mean more than the buzzing of a fly. The child learns to speak from an absolute beginning, just as, not the original man, but the original beast, learned to speak before any creature could speak." ⁴ The beasts evidently did not learn to speak. They only learned to use the beast cries, by which they transmitted warnings, sex invitations, calls to united struggles, etc. The cries answered the purpose and went no further. Men, by virtue of the expanding power in them which enthused

their zeal and their play, broke through the limitations of beast language, and went on to use the sounds of the human speech instrument for ever richer communications. Poetic power in blossom guides the development of a child's language as it guided that of the men who made the first languages.⁵ "The original languages must

¹ Gumpłowicz, *Social, und Politik*, 93.

² Whitney, *Language and the Study of Language.*, 37, 40.

⁸ Mauthner, *Kritik der Sprache* III, 2.

* *Ibid.*, II, 403. ⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 426, 427.